

1. Environmental public health and you

Every day, you probably use more Environmental Public Health Services than you realize. These slides show examples of what Clark County Public Health does on a typical day to protect your health and the health of the community.

2. Morning shower ~ 6:30 a.m.

If your home is not connected to public sewer, we give you information to keep your septic system functioning properly. This helps to ensure that harmful bacterial contamination won't threaten your household water, the community's water resources, and the yard your children play in.

3. Family breakfast ~ 7 a.m.

Your breakfast eggs came from a local grocery store, which we regularly inspect for safe food handling practices. Frozen juice concentrate is mixed with tap water. If your water comes from a public system, the quality is checked regularly by the state health department. If you have a private well, we help you learn to maintain it properly and obtain water quality testing.

4. Garbage pick-up ~ 7:30 a.m.

Before leaving for work, you take your garbage cans and recycling bins to the curb. They are picked up and delivered to a transfer station and then to a landfill. Our inspections help these businesses prevent groundwater contamination as well as infestations by disease-carrying pests such as rodents.

5. Children off to school ~ 7:45 a.m.

Schools work to comply with state board of health regulations for sanitation, playground safety, food safety, air quality, and building construction. We work with schools to keep your children safe by inspecting cafeterias and responding to concerns about disease outbreaks.

6. Lunch with friends ~ 12:10 p.m.

We inspect and permit the restaurant you dine in, working closely with management to help them meet rigorous sanitation and food handling standards. We also make sure the restaurant is a smoke-free environment. Inspection results are posted on our Web site for you to review. The food is prepared and served by staff who received food worker cards after completing our Public Health training courses.

7. Elderly parent suddenly becomes ill ~ 1 p.m.

Our team and the Public Health communicable disease staff inspect the senior living facility and conduct patient interviews to find the cause of illness. The outbreak is identified as a common virus that spreads easily in crowds. We work closely with facility employees to ensure the site is properly cleaned, teach handwashing practices to prevent further contamination, and provide health education to families.

8. Daughter goes to swim practice ~ 3:30 p.m.

We regularly inspect public swimming pools and spas for safety and cleanliness, and work with owners to make needed corrections. We also monitor natural bathing areas (lakes, rivers, and beaches) to identify unsafe conditions that create a potential for disease outbreaks. With other community partners, such as the Department of Ecology and Parks and Recreation, we take steps to protect you and your family from exposure.

9. Neighbor reports a dead crow ~ 4:20 p.m.

Your neighbor finds the bird in his backyard. He's heard that dead crows may indicate the presence of West Nile Virus in the community, so he calls Public Health. We collect the dead bird and ship it to a certified laboratory for testing. Our West Nile Virus brochure promotes the importance of reducing standing water where mosquitoes carrying this virus may breed.

10. Family fun ~ 6:30 p.m.

Home just in time to take the kids to the county fair! Before visiting the petting zoo, you review one of our handouts on how to prevent exposure to harmful bacteria and you make sure your family washes their hands after visiting the animals. Later, your family stops to eat at two of the food booths. Each has been inspected by our staff to ensure the food is safe for you to eat.

11. Late night news ~ 11 p.m.

Local news tells how Clark County Public Health is educating poultry farmers about the signs of bird flu infection. Another story talks about a meth lab bust by law enforcement and how we were called in to identify and arrange for the proper disposal of toxic materials. Afterwards, we ensure the home is certifiably cleaned before it's reoccupied or sold in order to protect the health of future residents.

12. Bedtime ~ 11:30 p.m.

While you sleep, our on-duty staff is available 24/7 by cell phone and pager, ready to respond to sewage spills, industrial accidents, outbreaks of food-borne illness, and other environmental public health emergencies.